United Nations A/57/L.75

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
4 March 2003

Original: English

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 53
Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Draft resolution submitted by the President of the General Assembly

Amendment to rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and opening date and duration of the general debate

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 51/241 of 31 July 1997, 52/232 of 4 June 1998, 53/224 of 7 April 1999, 53/239 of 8 June 1999 and 55/14 of 3 November 2000 concerning, inter alia, the opening date of the regular session of the General Assembly,

Recalling in particular paragraph 1 of its resolution 55/14, in which it decided to amend rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to read: "The General Assembly shall meet every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday following the second Monday in September",

Also recalling in particular its resolution 51/241, paragraph 19 of the annex, in which it decided that there should continue to be only one general debate each year, beginning in the third week of September, and paragraph 20 (a) of the annex, in which it decided that the general debate should be organized over a period of two weeks so as to maximize possibilities for inter-ministerial contacts,

Recalling that ad hoc arrangements had to be made regarding the duration and dates of the general debate at its fifty-fourth, fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth sessions,

Recalling also its decision 56/468 of 1 May 2002, by which it decided to hold an eight-day general debate at its fifty-seventh session, from Thursday, 12 September, to Sunday, 15 September, and from Tuesday, 17 September, to Friday, 20 September 2002,

Noting that the advancement of the opening date of the regular session as decided in its resolution 55/14 has resulted in insufficient time to ensure preparedness for the session,

Concerned about the impact that the fluctuation of the opening date and the interruption in the course of the general debate has had on its work and on Member States,

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Strongly convinced that resetting the opening date of the regular session of the General Assembly and predetermining the dates for the opening and duration of the general debate at future sessions will facilitate the organization of its work, including the work of its Main Committees, and will benefit Member States in their planning,

1. *Decides* to amend rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to read: "The General Assembly shall meet every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday of the third week in September, counting from the first week that contains at least one working day";

2. *Also decides* that the general debate in the General Assembly shall open on the Tuesday following the opening of the regular session of the General Assembly and shall be held without interruption over a period of nine working days;

3. *Further decides* that the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 above shall be implemented as from the fifty-eighth regular session; the fifty-eighth regular session shall therefore open on Tuesday, 16 September 2003, and the general debate shall open on Tuesday, 23 September 2003, and end on Friday, 3 October 2003; the fifty-seventh regular session shall therefore close on Monday, 15 September 2003;

4. *Decides* to annex paragraph 2 of the present resolution to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.